



# INDIANA **WORKFORCE** DEVELOPMENT

AND ITS **WorkOne** CENTERS

## **FORMAL COMMUNICATION**

**TO:** Adult Education Consortia Partners

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**DATE:** TBD

### **Technical Assistance Bulletin**

TAB 2011-XX

### **TABE Testing Procedures and Reporting**

#### ***Purpose***

To provide guidance on the effective use of the TABE assessment.

#### ***Content***

Adult education consortia partners shall use the Tests of Adult Basic Education, Forms 9 and 10 (TABE 9 & 10) to initially assess the basic skills of eligible adult learners.

#### **TABE Overview**

TABE 9&10 measures an adult learner's basic skills in the areas of reading, math, language, language mechanics, vocabulary, and spelling. The assessment includes a screening instrument, a standardized pretest to determine educational functioning level (EFL), and a post-test to measure gain from instruction for those students who enroll in adult education services.

For initial screening, clients shall be administered the Locator test. This determines at what level a test taker should be pre-tested. Shortly after the Locator test, the client shall be administered a pretest, which is the full length TABE exam. TABE may be administered in an online or paper and pencil format although the preferred method is TABE Online. It simplifies test administration and provides feedback on an examinee's education skills quickly and efficiently.

### TABE as a Guide for Placement WIA/Adult Education Services

Pre-test scores shall guide customer placement in adult education and/or occupational skills training. Academic Career Counselors (ACC) may also use the scores when advising customers who plan to pursue postsecondary institution or pre-postsecondary study, such as career pathways or a career certification. The ACC shall follow the guidelines below for these customers.

#### *Guidance for Postsecondary Advising*

Any customer who intends to enter a postsecondary institution that requires an entrance/placement exam should not be referred to the institution until their scores on TABE are high enough to indicate reasonable success in entering post-secondary credit or non-credit bearing courses.

- In most cases, a customer's score in reading, math, and language should be equivalent to grade level 11-12 before such a referral is made. However, the client's ACC may decide whether an individual is ready to sit for an entrance exam.
- If the customer takes an entrance/placement exam, e.g. Accuplacer or Compass, and does not score high enough to enter credit bearing courses (i.e., must take developmental courses), the individual should be referred to an Adult Education provider for remediation.

#### *Guidance for Pre-postsecondary Study and/or Career Certification Programs*

The ACC may also use TABE scores to determine if a student is ready to pursue pre-postsecondary study, such as Career Pathways, Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) programs, or Commercial Drivers Licenses (CDL) programs.

- If an individual has taken WorkKeys, the ACC could also utilize those scores to determine preparedness for occupational training. Note that an individual should not take WorkKeys in lieu of taking TABE for placement guidance.
- For example, a customer who plans to pursue bookkeeping should have minimum WorkKeys scores of 4, 4, and 4 in applied math, locating information, and reading for information. Minimum WorkKeys scores for occupations can be found at: <http://www.act.org/workkeys/occupprof/>.

### TABE Assessment Eligibility Criteria

Clients who plan to enroll in adult education services or co-enroll in WIA services and who meet the following criteria shall be assessed in reading, language, and/or math:

- At least 16 years of age;
- Officially withdrawn from a K-12 program;
- Does not have a high school diploma; OR
- A high school graduate who needs basic skill development in English, language arts, or mathematics at or below the high school level.

#### *Exceptions:*

1. Customers who have taken the COMPASS and/or ACCUPLACER exam and who provide documentation of earning the following minimum scores:
  - (1) Compass: Minimum Scores of 80, 70, and 35 in reading, writing, and Algebra, respectively
  - (2) Accuplacer: Minimum Scores of 89, 80, and 53 in reading, writing, and Elementary Algebra, respectively
2. Customers who hold a high school diploma or GED Certificate of Achievement may be exempt if the Academic and Career Counselor (ACC) determines their grades are sufficient for placement.
3. Customers who have college credit and who intend to return to the same postsecondary institution may be exempt if the ACC determines their grades are sufficient for placement.
4. Customers who are entering WIA On-the-Job Training or who are participating in on-site incumbent worker training do not need to be TABE tested.

#### Formal Assessment Process

The TABE assessment includes a screening instrument, a standardized pre-test to determine educational functioning level (EFL), and a post-test to measure gain from instruction.

#### *Screening Instrument*

The initial TABE test is a Locator test, which determines at what level a test taker should be pre-tested in each subject area. The five levels are: Literacy (L), Easy (E), Medium (M), Difficult (D), and Advanced (A). For example the student could locate to (E) for reading and (M) for mathematics. Since there is no alternative form of the locator instrument, the assessment cannot be used to determine placement or educational gain. Per DWD policy 2010-13, the TABE Locator must be administered prior to every initial TABE exam.

#### *Pre-Test*

Shortly thereafter, a student is administered a pretest to determine initial educational function levels in different subject areas. While DWD encourages assessment in multiple skill areas, **students must be assessed in reading, language, and math.** In accordance with federal National Reporting System (NRS) policy, students are then placed according to the lowest level unless the learner has indicated a desire to study in an area where a higher score was achieved.

#### *Post-Test*

For those clients who enroll in adult education services, a post-test must be administered after a certain number of instructional hours. Note that the alternate TABE form of the test that determined the initial educational level must be used. For example, if a student was pre-tested on TABE Form 9, the student should be post-tested on TABE Form 10. Please see DWD Policy 2011-XX, Indiana's Assessment Policy for Adult Education for the recommended number of instructional hours between Pre-Test and Post-Test.

While it is expected that all students will be administered a post-test, a minimum of 50 percent of students must be given a post-test. A student may be retested after additional instruction. There is no limit to the number of times a student may be post-tested.

### Testing Schedule

Testing should be scheduled so that the student is able to complete the test. While the test may be completed in one day, this could pose a problem for many of the customers. The test administrator should work with the customer to determine the scheduling of the required sub-tests and take the following into account:

- A customer will need to sit for the Locator test first. It is recommended that a student does not take the locator and then immediately sit for the full battery. The ACC should meet with the customer to discuss the results first and then schedule the complete battery of tests.
- Once a test has been started, it must be completed in the same session and within the time allotted.
- The full battery of every subtest does not have to be completed on the same day.

Please use the following chart to determine the testing schedule for each customer.

<b>Core Battery of Tests: 2 hours and 4 minutes</b>		
<b>Test</b>	<b>Time (Min)</b>	<b>Questions</b>
Reading	50	50
Math Computation	24	40
Applied Math	50	50

### Testing Accommodations

The accountability standards in WIA include the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. The purpose is to improve access to adult education programs and achieve employment outcomes for learners with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate their skills. Local programs are responsible for fulfilling learner requests for accommodations and must provide any necessary accommodations at no cost to the learner. Costs are negligible for most of the common accommodations that learners will request. See DWD Policy 2011-XX, Indiana's Assessment Policy for Adult Education, for further guidance.

Adult learners with disabilities are responsible for providing information and documentation of their disability. Documentation should be within the last five years and may include a medical doctor's report, a diagnostic assessment report from a certified professional, Individualized Education Program (IEPs) records from learners previously served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), or a report from Vocational Rehabilitation (or other service provider).

### Testing Protocol

All test sites shall administer the TABE assessment following the TABE testing protocol. If the protocol is not followed, the test will be considered invalid. Tests may also be invalidated for the following reasons:

- A question has been marked with multiple answers.
- Special circumstances, interruptions, or distractions that affect individual or group performance.
- A test taker experiences sudden illness or becomes unduly disturbed by the testing situation.

If a section of the test becomes invalid, the remaining sections may still be accepted. For the invalid section, a student will then need to be re-tested on the alternate TABE form.

### Score Reporting

All scores shall be entered in TrackOne until Client Connect goes live.

- For Youth, please record TABE scores as they were previously recorded
- For Adults, record the following for math, reading, and English:
  - Form of TABE (online, TABE 9-10, CLAS-E, etc.)
  - Level of Test (Literacy (L), Easy (E), Medium (M), Difficult (D), Advanced (A))
  - *Scale Score* and Grade Equivalent

Note that not all information will have a place for data entry in TrackOne. If this occurs, add a case note.

**NOTE:** Test scores for individual students can be found in the “Reports” button on the top left of the screen on the OAS.

**Note for Math Score:** For TABE Online, the "Total Math Score" value should be entered. For TABE paper/pencil results, the scaled math scores must be averaged and normed. Simply entering the average is not acceptable. See page 7 of the norms book for further instruction/clarification on this.